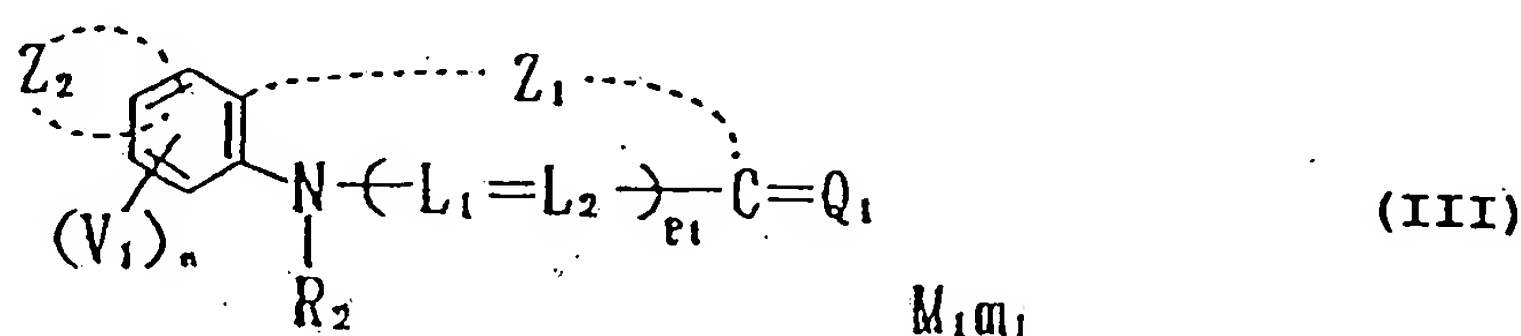


**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claim 1. (currently amended): A compound represented by formula (III):

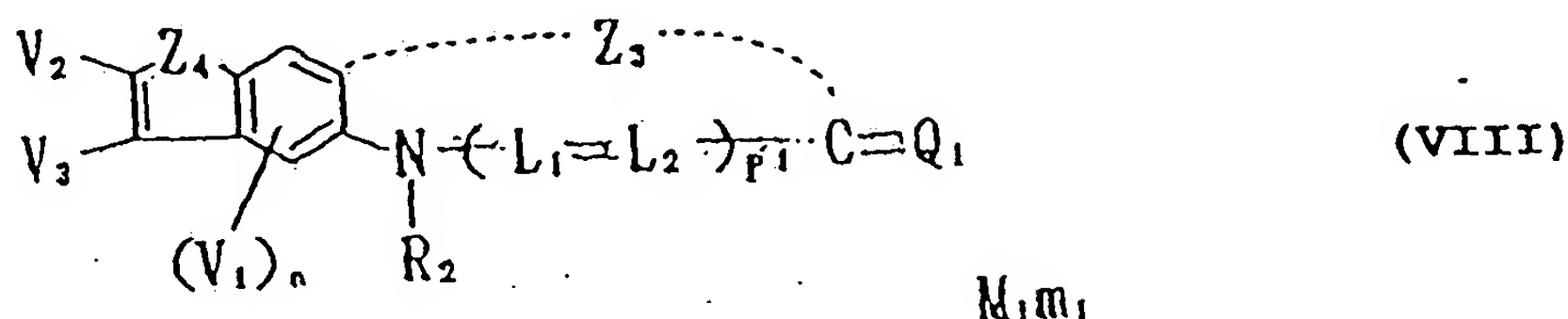


wherein  $Z_1$  represents an atomic group necessary to form thiazole;  $Z_2$  represents an atomic group selected from the group consisting of a furan ring and a thiophene ring which has are condensed to a benzo ring to form a tetracyclic ring system;  $R_2$  represents a substituted or unsubstituted alkyl group or a substituted or unsubstituted aryl group;  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  each represents a methine group;  $p_1$  represents 0;  $V_1$  represents a substituent selected from a halogen atom, a mercapto group, a cyano group, a carboxyl group, a phosphoric acid group, a sulfo group, a hydroxyl group, a carbamoyl group having from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, a sulfamoyl group having from 0 to 10 carbon atoms, a nitro group, an alkoxyl group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an aryloxy group having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, an acyl group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an acyloxy group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an acylamino group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, a sulfonyl group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, a sulfinyl group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, a sulfonylamino group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an amino

group, a substituted amino group selected from methylamino, dimethylamino, benzylamino, anilino, and diphenylamino, an ammonium group having from 0 to 15 carbon atoms, a hydrazino group having from 0 to 15 carbon atoms, a ureido group having from 1 to 15 carbon atoms, an imido group having from 1 to 15 carbon atoms, an alkylthio group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an arylthio group having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, an alkoxycarbonyl group having from 2 to 20 carbon atoms, an aryloxycarbonyl group having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, an unsubstituted alkyl group having from 1 to 18 carbon atoms, a substituted-alkyl group selected from hydroxymethyl, trifluoromethyl, benzyl, carboxyethyl, ethoxycarbonylmethyl, and acetylaminomethyl, an unsaturated hydrocarbon group having from 2 to 18 carbon atoms, an unsubstituted aryl group having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, a substituted aryl group selected from p-carboxyphenyl, p-nitrophenyl, 3,5-dichlorophenyl, p-cyanophenyl, m-fluorophenyl and p-tolyl, an unsubstituted heterocyclic group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, and a methylpyridyl group;  $Q_1$  represents a methine group or a polymethine group necessary to form a methine dye;  $M_1$  represents an electric charge balancing counter ion; and  $m_1$  represents a number of from 0 to 10 necessary to neutralize the electric charge of the molecule; and  $n$  represents 0, 1 or 2, and when  $n$  represents 2, a plurality of  $V_1$  may be the same or different.

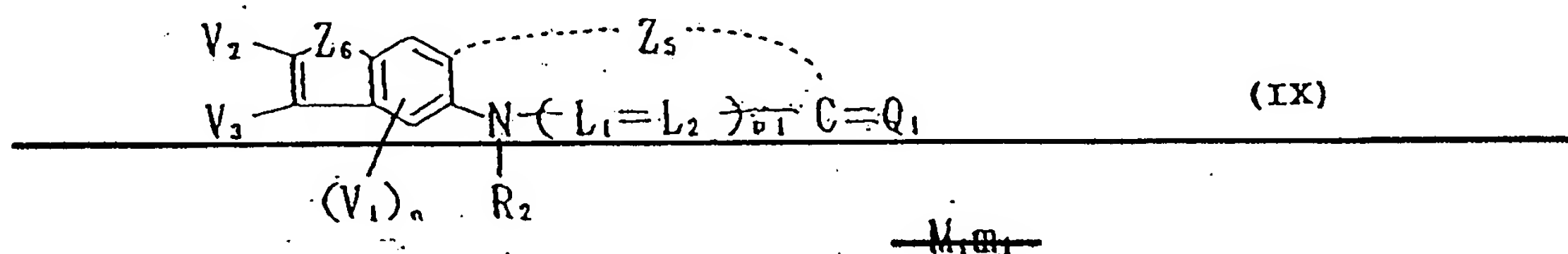
Claim 2. (previously presented): The compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein the selected atomic group for  $Z_2$  is a furan ring.

Claim 3. (currently amended): The compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compound represented by formula (III) is represented by formula (VIII) ~~or (IX)~~:



wherein  $Z_4$  represents an oxygen atom or a sulfur atom;  $Z_3$  represents an atomic group necessary to form thiazole,  $L_1$ ,  $L_2$ ,  $p_1$ ,  $V_1$ ,  $n$ ,  $R_2$ ,  $Q_1$ ,  $M_1$ , and  $m_1$  each has the same meaning as described in formula (III); and  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  each represents a substituent selected from a halogen atom, a mercapto group, a cyano group, a carboxyl group, a phosphoric acid group, a sulfo group, a hydroxyl group, a carbamoyl group having from 1 to 10 carbon atoms, a sulfamoyl group having from 0 to 10 carbon atoms, a nitro group, an alkoxyl group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an aryloxy group having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, an acyl group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an acyloxy group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an acylamino group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, a sulfonyl group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, a sulfinyl group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, a sulfonylamino group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an amino group, a substituted amino group selected from methylamino, dimethylamino, benzylamino, anilino, and diphenylamino, an ammonium group having from 0 to 15 carbon atoms, a hydrazino group having from 0 to 15 carbon atoms, a ureido group having from 1 to 15 carbon atoms, an imido group having from 1 to 15 carbon atoms, an alkylthio group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, an arylthio group having from 6 to 20, carbon atoms, an alkoxycarbonyl group having from 2 to 20 carbon atoms, an aryloxycarbonyl group having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, an unsubstituted alkyl group having from 1 to 18 carbon atoms, a substituted-alkyl group

selected from hydroxymethyl, trifluoromethyl, benzyl, carboxyethyl, ethoxycarbonylmethyl, and acetylaminomethyl, an unsaturated hydrocarbon group having from 2 to 18 carbon atoms, an unsubstituted aryl group having from 6 to 20 carbon atoms, a substituted aryl group selected from p-carboxyphenyl, p-nitrophenyl, 3,5-dichlorophenyl, p-cyanophenyl, m-fluorophenyl and p-tolyl, an unsubstituted heterocyclic group having from 1 to 20 carbon atoms, and a methylpyridyl group, and  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  form a condensed ring containing  $V_2$  and  $V_3$ [[;]]



wherein  $Z_6$  represents  $N-R_3$ ;  $Z_5$  represents an atomic group necessary to form thiazole;  $R_3$  represents a hydrogen atom or a substituent;  $L_1$ ,  $L_2$ ,  $p_1$ ,  $V_1$ ,  $n$ ,  $R_2$ ,  $Q_1$ ,  $M_1$ , and  $m_1$  each has the same meaning as described in formula (III); and  $V_2$  and  $V_3$  each has the same meaning as described in formula (VIII).

Claim 4. (original): The compound as claimed in claim 3, wherein  $R_2$  represents an alkyl group having an aryl group as a substituent or an aryl group.

Claim 5. (previously presented): The compound as claimed in claim 3, wherein at least one substituent represented by  $V_1$  is a group having at least one sulfo group, carboxyl group, phosphonic acid group or hydroxyl group.

Claim 6. (previously presented): The compound as claimed in claim 3, wherein at least one substituent represented by  $V_2$  or  $V_3$  in formula (VIII) is a group having at least one sulfo group, carboxyl group, phosphonic acid group or hydroxyl group.

Claim 7. (original): The compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein  $R_2$  represents an alkyl group having an aryl group as a substituent or an aryl group.

Claim 8. (previously presented): The compound as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one substituent represented by  $V_1$  is a group having at least one sulfo group, carboxyl group, phosphonic acid group or hydroxyl group.